

ABSTRACT

A floor covering composite made from at least a fibrous outer layer and an adhesive layer is disclosed. These layers are laminated and/or embossed to form elevated areas and depressed areas. Within the depressed areas, fibers from the fibrous outer layer are anchored by the adhesive layer activated by the laminating and/or embossing process. Within the elevated areas, the surface fibers of the fibrous outer layer are substantially free from the activated adhesive, and are movable relative to each other. Transitioning cluster areas are positioned between the depressed areas and the elevated areas. Fibers from the fibrous outer layer are partially bonded by the activated adhesive to provide some structural integrity to the fibers in the elevated areas. The composite may further include a backing layer, a gas permeable, liquid impermeable layer to allow the composite to vent, but prevent liquid from penetrating to the backing layer or to the substrate covered by the composite.